

RECORDED  
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
Washington 25, D. C.

August 4, 1952

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION CIRCULAR NO. 50

TO : Heads of Federal Agencies

SUBJECT: Assignment and Utilization of Space

1. Purpose. This Circular is to inform Federal agencies of the continued need for efficient and economical use of space in Government-owned and leased buildings, and to outline the responsibilities of the Administration and of the agencies in effecting such utilization.
2. Responsibilities of the Administration. It is the responsibility of the Administration to assign the agencies sufficient space to carry out their programs, provided that requests for such space are justified to the satisfaction of the Administration. It is also the responsibility of the Administration to enforce efficient utilization, recapturing for release or reassignment any space which the agencies are not able to justify to the satisfaction of the Administration as being required.
3. Responsibilities of the Agencies. The attention of the agencies is directed to Real Property Management Regulation No. 3, which provides that they shall continuously review their use of space with a view toward efficient and full utilization, and cooperate in furnishing space and personnel data as requested.
4. Assignment and Utilization Factors. To assist the agencies in evaluating their space utilization, the factors influencing space use and the space allowances used by the Administration are described below. These allowances are directed toward providing a national average office space utilization of ninety square feet per person and in effecting a sizeable reduction in other than office space used by the agencies.
  - a. It is recognized that the function and staff composition of an agency; the type of operation; physical characteristics of space; rental, service and alterations costs, and other special conditions must be considered in assigning space and evaluating its use.
  - b. These allowances, which have been developed from observations

and studies made of space occupied by the various agencies, are prescribed for agency guidance. Variations will exist in the type of space occupied for similar purposes and the margins between the upper and lower limits of the allowances take this into consideration. Every effort must be made to adhere to the lower limits of the allowances. Occupancy will only approach the upper limit of the allowances in the case of enforced use of unsuitable facilities or other unfavorable governing conditions.

(1) Office Space.

<u>Type of Office Space</u>	<u>Square Feet Per Person</u>	
	<u>Min.</u>	<u>Max.</u>
Total office space including executive	65	100
(*Office, clerical and stenographic)	45	90
(Office, Executive)	80	225
Business Machines	50	100
Drafting Room	75	90

\*Includes administration and professional personnel below the top executive level.

The office space allowances provide for agency averages ranging generally between 80 and 100 square feet per person. Some agencies will range below 80 square feet per person and a few may be above 100 square feet per person.

(2) Files Space.

<u>Type of Space</u>	<u>Square Feet Per Cabinet</u>	
	<u>Min.</u>	<u>Max.</u>
File Areas	5	8

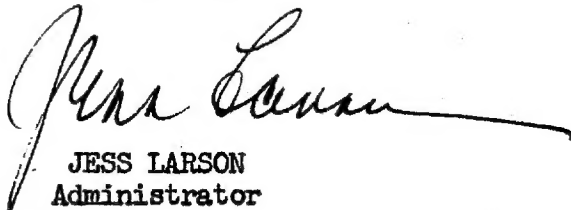
When more than 15 file cabinets are placed in rows face to face, with aisles between, the utilization should range between 5 and 7 square feet per cabinet for standard files, and between  $6\frac{1}{2}$  and 8 square feet per cabinet for legal files. This allowance includes aisles but does not provide desk space for employees located in the file room, which may be added to the total file area. The upper limits of these allowances should be approached only for extremely active file areas.

(3) Other Types of Space. Because of the varied uses of non-office space it is not possible in all instances to establish definite square foot space allowances and yet a

large percentage of the total space used by the agencies is utilized for non-office purposes. Special conditions pertinent to an agency program will, in many instances, govern the assignment and utilization of non-office space. It is therefore important that space occupied for non-office purposes be examined in the light of minimum program requirements. Steps should be taken to find a suitable use for or the release of any space which may be made available by more efficient arrangement or by the reduction of agency facilities to the minimum required for efficient operation. Every effort should be made to locate non-office functions in space appropriate to the facility being housed.

5. Conservation of Space. The assistance of all agencies is requested in effecting economies through more efficient utilization of space whether office, files, storage or other types. In order to effect economies it will be necessary for agencies to:
  - a. Utilize open space, eliminating partitions wherever possible.
  - b. Double up in private offices, eliminating as many single occupancy rooms as possible.
  - c. Study agency space layouts leading to better program efficiency in less space.
  - d. Consider the transfer of records not needed for day-to-day use to a records depository.
  - e. Eliminate all unnecessary furniture from active office areas.

It is requested that this program of conservation be called to the attention of all offices of your agency and that they be urged to take active steps toward meeting the above space allowances and effecting such economies of operation as may be possible commensurate with the requirements of agency programs.

  
JESS LARSON  
Administrator